THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S.REGUPATHY): (a) The percentage of area covered by forests in the country is 20.64.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Project for cleaning of Yamuna

2509. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have started a project for cleaning of Yamuna water in Delhi;

(b) if so, whether the project is successful;

(c) the amount of expenditure which has been incurred during this project; and

(d) the reasons for its failure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) Yamuna Action Plans (YAP) have been taken up by Government of India with the assistance of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation in a phased manner for undertaking pollution abatement works for the river Yamuna. Under the phase-I of YAP launched in April, 1993, 753.25 million litres per day (mld) of sewage treatment capacity was created, of which 30 mld in Delhi. YAP-I was declared closed in February, 2003.

Under the YAP-II, which commenced in December, 2004 at an approved cost of Rs. 624 crore, major portion of the outlay *i.e.* Rs. 387.17 crore, has been allocated to Delhi. A sewage treatment capacity of 135 mld is envisaged to be created under YAP-II in Delhi. In addition, projects for the rehabilitation of 324 mld treatment capacity and rehabilitation/laying of trunk sewers for a length of 30.82 kms are also envisaged under the YAP-II. So far under YAP-II, an amount of Rs. 29.5 crore has been released to the implementing agencies in Delhi for implementation of the sanctioned schemes. In addition to the above Action Plan, the Government of Delhi has also taken up large scale non-sewerage, sewerage and sewage treatment works out of their own plan funds.

Implementation of the river pollution abatement works is an ongoing and continuous activity under which various schemes of pollution abatement are implemented by the Government based upon the estimated pollution loads. The quality of water in Yamuna river has not shown the desired improvement, particularly in Delhi, due to enormous increase in pollution load and lack of fresh water in the river during lean period.

Role of RCCF in protection of forests and wildlife

2510. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a Regional Chief Conservator of Forests posted at Bangalore;

(b) the duties and role assigned to him in protection of forests and wildlife;

(c) whether the RCCF (South) visited the River Godavari and Papikonda Hills last year;

(d) if so, the purpose of such visits;

(e) whether any forest clearance has been announced by him during such visits; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) Yes, Sir. However, at present the post of Regional Chief Conservator of Forests (RCCF) is vacant. The Conservator of Forests (Central) posted there is holding the charge of RCCF.

(b) The duties and functions of the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) Yes, Sir. The RCCF, Southern Regional Office had visited river Godavari and Papikonda Hills during February, 2006.

(d) The State Government of Andhra Pradesh had submitted a proposal for diversion of 3267 ha of forest land for Indira Sagar (Polavaram) Project across river Godavari under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The site-inspection of the Project area was undertaken by the then Regional Chief Conservator of Forests during February, 2006.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Statement

Duties and functions of the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests

(i) All the proposals from the State/UT Governments involving diversion/ dereservation of forest land upto 40 ha. and proposals for clearing of naturally grown trees in forest areas or portion thereof will be examined by RCCF.

(ii) The Regional Chief Conservator of Forests is competent to finally dispose off all proposals (including decision regarding violation of the Act) involving diversion/dereservation for forest land up to 5 ha. except in respect of proposals of regularization of encroachments and mining (including renewal of mining leases). Similarly proposals involving clearing of naturally grown trees in forest area or portion thereof for reafforestation will also be finally disposed off by the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests subject to the guidelines/ instructions issued in this regard.

(iii) In respect of proposals involving diversion of forest area above 5 ha. and up to 40 ha. and all proposals for regularization of encroachments and mining up to 40 ha. the proposals will be examined by the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests in consultation with State

Advisory Group consisting of representatives of ths State Government from Revenue Department, Forest Department, Planning and/or Finance Department and concerned Department whose proposal is being examined. The views of the Advisory Group will be recorded by the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests and along with the same, the proposal will be sent to the Ministry of Environment and Forests for consideration and final dscision.

(iv) Any other work assigned by the Ministry of Environment and Forests to the Regional Office including site inspection of the forest areas proposed to be diverted for non forestry use under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

Migratory birds coming to India

†2511. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the names of places in India where migratory birds generally arrive and the months in which they arrive;

(b) whether their number has been decreased; and

(c) if so, the steps taken/to be taken to increase/facilitate their numbers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY) : (a) Migratory birds visit each and every part of India. However, places like wetlands are of special significance in this regard. Some of the important wetlands in the country, where relatively large congregation of migratory birds occur are Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur (Rajasthan), Sultanpur National Park (Haryana), Ranganthittoo Bird Sanctuary (Karnataka), and Nawabganj (Uttar Pradesh). The migratory birds generally start arriving in India during July-August and maximum arrival takes place during September-October.

(b) As per the information available with this Ministry, there are no reports to indicate that the number of migratory birds have decreased in India. However, a few rare birds like Siberian Crane and Sociable Plover have shown population decline.

(c) The steps taken by Central Government to preserve the migratory species and their habitats, *inter alia*, include:

1. The Central Government has enacted the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to protect wildlife including migratory birds.

2. Stringent penalties are imposed on the offenders for the contravention of the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

3. A large number of wetlands, where migratory birds occur have been declared as Protected Areas (Sanctuaries, National Parks and Conservation reserves) primarily for the protection of these birds.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.